

Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of Public Health
Pre Hospital Preparedness Emergency Response
(formerly Hospital Preparedness-Emerg. Response) Fact Sheet

The Bureau of EMS (BEMS) shall develop a state plan for the prompt and efficient delivery of adequate emergency medical services to acutely sick and injured individuals. BEMS shall serve as the primary agency for participation in any federal program involving emergency medical services and may receive and, pursuant to legislative appropriation, disburse available federal funds to implement any service program (RS 40:123.1.C.).

- A reduction in funding would reduce pre-hospital evacuation planning for an event or incident; thus, impacting morbidity and mortality in disasters.
- An increase in funding would maximize pre-hospital evacuation planning capabilities leading to improved and efficient delivery of care during a disaster.

Objective

Implement actions to protect life within the State by planning, resourcing, training, exercising, and organizing to build, sustain, and improve pre-hospital preparedness emergency operational capabilities.

Performance Indicators

1. Organize the proper key personnel to facilitate flexible preparedness, response, and recovery operations over a prolonged period. Ensuring sufficient resources are available to support sustainable operations based upon a conducted gap analysis of local and state capabilities.
2. Provide professional emergency management education to first responders.
3. Establish agreements between entities that provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance.
4. Organize a phased, supervised withdrawal of residents from a dangerous area and movement to safety; then, return the residents to an evacuated area.
5. Define the State EMS Director and State EMS Medical Director positions in State statute.

Narrative

It is critically important that EMS resources are available for state, regional, and local responses to disasters. EMS leaders need to be actively involved in public health preparedness planning to ensure that EMS resources are integrated into the state, regional, and local disaster response

plans. However, in an incident or event there may be more casualties than the local acute care facilities can handle, requiring the activation of a larger emergency response plan.

Planning and integration of related systems (public health, EMS, and emergency management) are important because of the extensive impact disasters have on providing care. Relationships and cooperation between EMS and emergency management agencies support the provision of assets that enable a more rapid and organized disaster response.

Mass casualty events and disasters are chaotic, and only with planning and drills will a more organized response be possible. Simulation or tabletop drills provide an opportunity to test the emergency preparedness response plans for EMS and other systems. Exercises must be conducted jointly with other agencies to ensure that all aspects of the response plan are integrated, functional, and responsive to local needs.

- BEMS has oversight of statewide coordinated, accountable systems of pre-hospital emergency care. The 64 Parish Medical Societies determine the medical protocols within their parishes.
- BEMS has brought together multiple stakeholder groups and other state agencies to assist with, and make recommendations on, the development and implementation of EMS operations during incidents or events.

BEMS, as the lead agency, is authorized to plan, develop, lead, monitor and regulate a comprehensive statewide EMS system. This system is specified as including a statewide organization of regionalized, coordinated and accountable systems of emergency care with the component subsystems described in the national model as outlined in the "State Emergency Medical Services Systems: A Model, July, 2008." (The National Association of State EMS Officials, with support from, Office of Emergency Medical Services, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, US Department of Transportation).

Better Health

- Planning Assessment: An assessment of the EMS emergency preparedness plans, including coordination with public health and emergency management agencies, resulted in the discovery of an incomplete response system. Policy Development: BEMS will develop and reevaluate plans and operations using an all hazards approach.
- Resourcing Assessment: BEMS has access to additional equipment, materials, and personnel for disasters, but not the operational control of the equipment and logistical support. Policy Development: BEMS recognizes that limited operational control of equipment and logistical support is contrary to mission success. Therefore, BEMS will develop the necessary infrastructure to manage the logistics and supporting elements needed to respond to a disaster.

- Training and Exercise Assessment: Historically, it is evident that BEMS has not participated in or conducted any training or exercises using national best practice models aimed at implementing an all hazards response. Policy Development: BEMS will adopt and implement the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program.
- Organizing Assessment: Currently, BEMS emergency preparedness and response section includes two full time equivalent staff and nine regional volunteers. Policy Development: The emergency response section should include, at a minimum, five full time equivalent staff (a manager, a system analyst, three tri-regional coordinators) and nine full time regional coordinators.

Assessment: Louisiana has a population over 4.6 million, with 254 ambulances in service for serving our residents. Over 40% of the State is considered as being either rural and/or in a professional health care shortage area. The State currently has only two Level 1 Trauma Centers with a distance between the two of greater than 300 miles. According to The American College of Surgeons, Committee on Trauma, the State should have a minimum of one Level 1 Trauma Center per one million populations. The competency for EMS personnel must be at the highest level to ensure a greater survival rate secondary to prolonged transport times.

Evidence

Planning: BEMS will draft and develop a comprehensive all hazards response plan.

Resourcing: Develop the requirements to provide a local to statewide response strategy in support of emergency operations to include personnel, equipment, training and operational exercises.

Training and Exercise: Recruit and train personnel to function as emergency responders during a disaster and conduct exercises to validate their skills.

Organizing: Create an operational unit that would include regional personnel that are available to respond to a disaster 24/7/365 and the logistical support to ensure the mission is successful.